

2020 PINOT NOIR *Elton*

VINTAGE FACTS 2020

A mild and dry winter in 2019-20 was followed by a dry growing season. Rain during bloom reduced the crop size by 38% on average, which is the lowest in Oregon winemaking history. Following bloom, we had a beautiful growing season, with warm and dry conditions. When we have a low-yielding vintage, the wines are very concentrated in color, tannins and body. Heat stress during the summer was moderate and pest and disease pressure was low.

The expansive size of the Willamette Valley and the fact that our vineyards are scattered throughout were a clear advantage for fruit sourcing after the wildfires this season; our sites were largely unimpacted.

It is very rare in Oregon that you get enough hang time on the vine to develop brown seeds. In mid-September, the daytime temperatures in some areas barely cracked 60 degrees, halting sugar ripeness, but continuing physiological ripeness where things like flavors and tannins develop. Much of the tannins come from the seeds and 2020 had a higher level of brown seeds, so the resulting wines have complex nutty, spicy and earthy qualities.

THE VINEYARD

Elton: In 2006, *Wine & Spirits* listed it as one of the five key vineyards in the new Eola-Amity Hills American Viticultural Area. In 2007, Elton Vineyard was named one of Oregon's top ten vineyards by *Wine Press Northwest*. Planted in 1983, the vineyard now includes 60 acres on east-southeast slopes of the Eola Hills. The elevation rises from 250-500 feet, and the soil is Jory and Nekia.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The stylistic vision is pure Pinot Noir fruit with a juicy mouthfeel, balanced oak and soft, sweet, ripe tannins. The methodology includes attention to detail from vineyard to bottle. Picked at peak ripeness, the fruit was gently destemmed, with approximately 90% of the berries remaining intact for intra-berry fermentation, which adds lively fruit forward characteristics. Prior to fermentation, the must underwent a five day pre-fermentation cold soak which provides improved complexity, color and mouthfeel. On the fifth day, the must was inoculated with commercial yeast. After 8-12 days of fermentation in small fermenters, punched down by hand, the must was pressed out and allowed to settle in the tank overnight. The new wine was barreled with light, fluffy lees and underwent malolactic fermentation.



TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Pinot Noir

Clones: 114, 115, 777, Pommard and Wädenswil

Appellation: Eola-Amity Hills

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic), Nekia (shallow iron rich volcanic)

Harvest Date: October 5 – 16, 2020

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.7°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.88 g/L
- **pH:** 3.42

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 14.0%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.32 g/L
- **pH:** 3.40
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: Small bins

Barrel Regimen: 16 months in barrel, 10% new French oak

Bottling Date: February 28, 2022

TASTING NOTES

Ruby in color with aromas of cherry, blackberry, caramel and earth, the wine offers flavors that mirror aromas with the addition of cranberry, raisin and baking spices. The palate is medium bodied and silky with integrated tannins and tense acidity.

Peak Drinkability: 2022 – 2031

FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with grilled steelhead or salmon, lamb chops with a balsamic reduction, herb roasted pork tenderloin, duck breast with blackberry compote and dishes topped with fresh truffles.

